

L'Analyse du Cycle de Vie d'un produit ou d'un service. Applications et mise en pratique

Authors: Laurent Grisel and Philippe Osset

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Reviewer: Jean-Francois Le Teno

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That this book contains a very short description of standardised LCA steps in Annex B only, and that Annex C is about how NOT to do an LCA say it all.

Reputed experts and practitioners of LCA Laurent Grisel and Philippe Osset offer readers of 'L'Analyse du Cycle de Vie d'un produit ou d'un Service – Applications et mise en pratique' (Life Cycle Analysis of a product or a service – Applications and practice) a very clear and pedagogical book that guides them – with numerous references to real cases, from applications of LCA to single products to their contributions to the definition of sustainable development policies.

This book is therefore not about theory, it is about practice of a methodology (LCA) and a conceptual model (the so-called 'life-cycle approach') that has come of age thanks to intensive and sometimes very harsh field tests performed by industries on a whole or governments trying to define and substantiate improved environmental products and policies.

That LCA is now a reputable and recommended methodology is demonstrated in Part I of the book, thus allowing the authors to move to presenting and discussing products environmental evaluation, improvement and innovation applications in Part II and to discuss products environmental information communication, sharing and enrichment between stakeholders in Part III.

The demonstration is striking that thinking in terms of life cycle is necessarily leading to thinking out of the box in technical but also human, commercial and economical terms. A very interesting aspect of LCA pointed out by MM Grisel & Osset is that collaboration between stakeholders is a clear key to mutual environmental (and economical) benefits.

Part IV follows a similar line of reasoning, but starts from single production plants evaluation to move on to quality – health – environment integrated management systems and industrial ecology. Finally, Part V present the strong links and inputs of LCA to sustainable development.

The practice of LCAs is presented and discussed at length in Part VI, starting from a description of their 'ecosystem' – with an ever evolving and growing biotope of standards, tools and data sources in which a very varied and often conflicting 'fauna' of stakeholders interacts.

In a second section, the authors deliver precious advice on how to successfully manage LCA-based projects to the best interest of those involved and with a view to the diffusion and reuse of the knowledge produced to other users and objectives.

Overall, the book is a timely landmark on the LCA fast growing path, giving readers a wide angle picture of all concepts, fields and issues involving LCA today. Of even higher value to many readers, it offers a quintessence of years spent by both authors contributing to advances in theory while intensively practicing LCA.